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STRATEGY ON THE DAIRY FRONT

Broadcast by Tom G. Stitts, Chief of the Dairy and Poultry Branch, Food Distribution Administration, and Wallace Kadderly, Chief of Radio Service, in the Department of Agriculture's portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, Friday, June 25, 1943, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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KADDERLY: Milk, butter, cheese, and other dairy products are important wartime foods about which many of us have questions these days. Many consumers could use more than they're getting. And farmers are seeking ways to increase or at least maintain production. For some straight answers to questions about the dairy situation, we're going to talk with Tom G. Stitts, Chief of the Dairy and Poultry Branch of Food Distribution Administration. Tom, since all dairy products start out as milk, let's look first at the supply of milk. How does it look, in comparison with our needs.

STITTS: Well, Wallace, we won't have any surplus to worry aboutI can tell you that. If this were 1940 -- instead of forty-three -- we might be wondering right now just how we're going to get all this milk we're producing into the people who need it. But today our problem is -- how to get enough milk into enough of the people who need it.

KADDERLY: No matter how much milk we produce, it won't be enough..eh?

STITTS: It won't be too much -- that's a cinch. We have to keep a great big river of milk flowing. It has three branches: one to our armed forces, who are using more milk now than they ever drank at home at their own dinner tables; one stream to our civilians, who are wanting more milk now, since they're able to pay for it; and the third branch to our friends and allies, who need every drop of milk we can send them, in various forms. The people of such places as England and Malta could really tell us how important milk is.

KADDERLY: I know. And with these three streams -- our armed forces, our civilians, and our Allies -- constantly draining out, it's all we can do to keep the river of milk flowing.

STITTS: Exactly. And that's why some people -- in many sections of this country -- haven't been able to get as much milk as they'd like to. Most of them are making more money now than they did before the war, and since they can't buy new cars and homes and refrigerators with it, they'd like to buy more of the better kinds of food.

KADDERLY: And milk is certainly one of the better kinds.

STITTS: Right. And we'd like to see that day when every person in this country could buy as much milk as he or she wants. But this is not the day. Until this war is won, we're all going to have to be satisfied with our share.

KADDERLY: And that goes for foods made from milk too -- butter and cheese.

STITTS: Of course. Why, if we went on eating all the butter we wanted -- or even as much as we used to eat in peacetime -- there just wouldn't be enough to keep our Army and Navy supplied -- let alone the Russian Army. The Russian Army is the only one outside of our own armed forces to which we send butter.

KADDERLY: Well, Tom--could you tell us how you figure we can keep this river of milk and milk products flowing?

STITTS: It seems to me that in order to accomplish that there are three main things we've got to do. First -- we must produce as much milk as we possibly can.

KADDERLY: Absolutely.

STITTS: Second - we must make the best possible use of the milk we produce - by deciding just how much of that milk should be left fluid, and how much should be made up into the various dairy products.

KADDERLY: Like butter - and cheese . . .

STITTS: And ice cream.

KADDERLY: I think we all realize that not too much of our limited milk supply should go into any one of them. Now, Tom, you said we need to produce as much milk as we can. But production is a hard problem this year - with manpower short and farm machinery getting out of whack.

STITTS: I know, but in the case of dairy farmers and cheese and creamery operators, I think we're solving some of the problem - at least as far as manpower goes.

KADDERLY: You mean - since the Selective Service Boards have been instructed not to draft essential farm labor.

STITTS: Yes, Wallace, that's helping to keep the men where they're most needed.

KADDERLY: And how about new machines and repair parts?

STITTS: Those look more promising too. We expect that enough steel and rubber will be allocated this year to provide farmers with the machines most needed. And the same is true for creameries and cheese plants. The Government has helped them get priorities for equipment and even whole new buildings.

KADDERLY: Well, now about the feed to give the cows that give the milk?

STITTS: Feed's our first problem. And, I'm glad to say that this problem is being tackled now. And not farmers alone but also by Government and by the Dairy Industry Committee, which represents all the groups of dairy products.

The Committee has drawn up an eight-point feed program, which they and the War Food Administration are recommending to farmers. One big point is to use more home-grown feed -- and so help the cows increase their milk output. Another point--feed mixing companies are cooperating to conserve the kinds that contain body-building proteins. Also, the Government has made arrangements to import feed supplies from other countries. And Congress has authorized the Commodity Credit Corporation to sell 50 million more bushels of wheat for animal feed.

KADDERLY: All those things should help.

STITTS: Yes, but farmers will still have to stretch and conserve their feed supplies.

KADDERLY: Well, you know, Tom -- I think our Farm and Home friends would like to hear how the Food Distribution Administration divides up those three streams. How you decide how much should go to the Army--how much to Lend-Lease--and so on.

STITTS: To tell that story -- clearly -- would take quite a lot of time.

KADDERLY: I mean just briefly - just as far as milk's concerned.

STITTS: Well, it's all part of our wartime dairy program. Briefly, it means figuring out the needs of the three groups of people who will get those dairy products - 'way ahead of time. It means setting aside more of the butter and cheese at times of highest milk production.

KADDERLY: Like right now. We're putting a large part of our butter and cheese in cold storage.

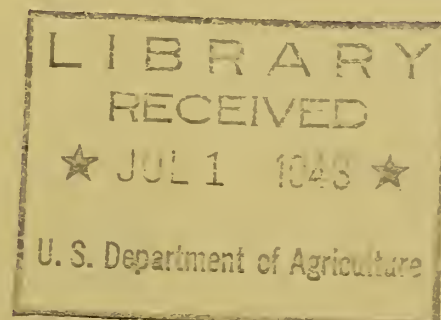
STITTS: That's it. So that we can keep the civilian stream of dairy products flowing at a pretty even level all year 'round. Next winter -- when milk starts to get low -- we can set this cold-storage butter and cream flowing downstream - and into the branch of the river that heads toward our armed forces. That way we can keep more of the milk that's actually produced next winter flowing straight to our civilians. Keep all three branches flowing all the year through - instead of flooding at one time and running dry another.

KADDERLY: I think that idea of the river makes the dairy program pretty clear, Tom. As you say, to tell the whole story clearly would take at least one whole Farm and Home Hour. Maybe sometime you'll come back and tell us more of it.

STITTS: I'd be glad to, Wallace.

KADDERLY: Very good, Farm and Home friends, the man who has been giving us the facts about our wartime dairy program is Tom G. Stitts, Chief of the Dairy and Poultry Branch of the Food Distribution Administration.

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